

The Horrid Sin

OF

Man-Catching :

Explain'd

In a SERMON upon JER. 5. 23, 26.

Preach'd at COLCHESTER, July 10. 1681.

By EDMOND HICKERINGILL, Rector of
the Rectory of All-Saints there.

*Deliver me not over to the will of mine Enemies, for False Witnesses are
risen up against me, and such as breath out Cruelty. Psal. 27. 12.
They laid to my Charge things that I knew not. Psal. 35. 11.
The Chief Priests and Scribes sought how they might kill him, for they
feared the People: then entered Satan into Judas. Luke. 22. 2, 3.
Now the Chief Priests and Elders, and all the Council sought False Witness
against Jesus to put him to Death: but found none: yea, though many
False Witnesses came, yet found they none; At the last came two False
Witnesses. Matth. 26. 59, 60.*

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The Horrid Sin

OF

IN THE

CONFESSION

BY

THE

REVEREND

FATHER

OF

THE

CHURCH

OF

THE

DIocese

OF

THE

DIocese

THE
EPISTLE
TO THE
READER.



Know very well that every Book-sellers Stall groans under the burthen of Sermons, Sermons;—Sermons as common (and as commonly cryed about the Streets) as Ballads; Sermons before his Majesty, before the Judges, before the Right Honourable, the Right Worshipful, &c.

In Court, in City, in the University, in the Country, &c. Sermons of good use, Sermons of little or no use, Sermons of great use, (especially to those reading Dons of the Pulpit, that transcribing other Men's Works, make a shift to read them, tho many times as much out of the Story, as hard to get in again when they are out, as having never been either in their Heads or Hearts;) Sermons of Learned Composure both for Matter and Style; and Sermons given, and Sermons sold (over and over again) and some Sermons (perhaps) published out of meer Vanity and Itch to be seen in print.

Which of these, or whether any of these caused the Publication of this Country-Sermon, (neither contriv'd, devis'd nor intended for the Press, but) preach'd in my ordinary Course in my own Parish, I do not think my self concerned to give thee any account; for they that like it not, may let it alone; yet the pub-

The Epistle to the Reader.

publishing thereof is chiefly intended for the use of them that have most need of it, and who will (therefore) like it so much the worse.

Some Men are so crafty as in neglect of their Duty to God, to their King, the Kingdom, and their own Souls, they dare not preach against this Sin of Man-catching, or Trepanning Men by Sham-Evidence, false Witnesses, Sham-Plots, the Sin of the Text, (I had almost said) of the Times: in swearing and unswearing, lying, slandering, and forswearing, and so setting Snares to catch Men, Body and Goods, Life and Estate: whilst the World is the worse, but never the better for those Preachers, those Chips in Broth, whose God is their Bel-lies, and are only swayed by that Kitchen-Maxime, It is good sleeping in a whole Skin; whilst I chuse to follow that Plain-Dealer and Martyr, Bishop Latimer, who presented the King for a New-Years Gift, with a Bible, with this Inscription in Letters of Gold on the outside thereof (perhaps for fear the King should not much trouble himself with looking on the inside) Heb. 13. 4. Marriage is honourable in all, and the Bed undefiled; but Whoremongers and Adulterers God will judge.

I know not what Thanks he got for his New-Years Gift, but he prov'd a true Prophet in one of his Sermons, where he says, We Ministers cannot say Væ Vobis, but presently we are called coram Nobis: We cannot reprove Sin in the Pulpit, but forthwith we may be reprov'd for it by the Bench. But (Blessed be God) we do not live (as Latimer once did) in Popish-Times, nor in Times where Popery has the greatest Sway: Or if we should, It is the greatest Honour, as well as greatest Piety, to follow his Fate, as well as his Honesty and Plain-dealing.

Wien. 8.

THE



THE
Horrid Sin of *Man-Catching*.

Explain'd in a

SERMON

Upon JER. 5. 25, 26.

Your Iniquities have turned away these things, and your Sins have withholden good things from you. For among my People are found wicked Men, they lay wait as he that setteth Snares, they set a Trap, they catch Men.



IN which Words, I shall only take notice in General; 1. Of God's heavy Judgment upon *Israel*, ver. 25. 2. Of the Cause of that heavy Judgment, the crying Sin of *Man-Catching*, ver. 26.

But First (to keep to the Method in the Text) Let us enquire,

1. Of what Nature was this heavy Judgment?

In Answer whereunto, we may consider God's heavy Judgments, or heavy Hand. 1. *Positively*: 2. *Privatively*.

1. By stretching forth his Hand of Wrath in striking a People with either, 1. The *Sword of the Lord*; (for so is cal-

led, 1 Chron. 21. 12.

Quest. 1.
Answ.

The Horrid Sin

led, the Plague of Pestilence.) Or 2dly, with War, Foreign or Civil War, though managed with the *Sword of Man*, yet God is said to unsheath it, and call for it; and therefore also Wars, bloody Wars are God's heavy Judgment upon a People, and therefore, called also — *The Sword of the Lord*.

Isa. 34. 5, 6.

Ezek. 14. 17.

2. God's heavy Hand or heavy Judgment upon a People may be considered *Privatively*, by *depriving them of Mercies*, Temporal Mercies, called *good things* in the Text, which God for their Sins had turned away and *withholden* from them.

What these *good things* were (which were *withholden*) may evidently be seen in the verse before the Text; namely, God's heavy Judgment in *depriving them of the former and latter Rain in his season, and depriving them of the appointed Weeks of the Harvest*, Jer. 5. 24.

2 Kings 6.
25, 26, 27,
28, 29, 30.

This great Drought did fore-run and threaten a *Famine*, (the worst and heaviest of God's Judgments,) the *Sword of the Lord*, and the *Sword of Man* (both of them) make quick dispatch; but Famine is a lingering Death, and worse than Death, and the worst of Death's. And it was sad News for the King, when he heard, that his Subjects were glad to *preserve their Lives by killing one another*; nay, the Mother killing and eating her own Child, and yet calling in vain to the King for help, that could not have an *Asser Head* for himself under *four score pieces of Silver*, nor a little *Pigeon's Dung* (for the Dessert or second Course) under *five pieces more*: 2 Kings 6. 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30. No wonder that the King rent his Cloaths, and wore Sack-cloth upon his Flesh, to mortify it. A great Drought, or God's withdrawing the Rain, bespeaks a *Dearth*, as well as the Wrath of God upon a Land, when the *Dust* (as God says to Job) *groweth into hardness, and the Clods cleave fast together; when the Clouds are stayed, and the Bottles of Heaven* (as God there calls them) *are stopped*, and the People cannot get a Dram

Job 38. 37.
38.

of ~~Man~~ Catching.

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Drank ~~of~~ these Bottles, tho' it were to save their Lives.

In the ~~three~~ and thirtieth year of that wanton King *Hen.* *Hen. 8.
Baker's
Chron. 298.*
8th there was so great a Drought, that small Rivers were
clean dried up, and much Cattel died for want of Water
and Food; and afterwards.

In the *five* and thirtieth year of Queen *Eliz.* was so great a
Drought, that not only the Fields, but the Springs them-
selves were dried up, and many Cattel every where dyed
for want of *Waters*, which are the *good things* mentioned
in the *Text*, the good things that God withdrew and withheld
from the People for their Sins, their crying Sin?

And what (in the 2d place) was that crying Sin?

Quest. 2.

The *Text* tells us, It was the Sin of ensnaring, lying in
wait, and at catch; as *he that setteth Snares to catch* (not
Wild-Beasts, but) *Men*, Honest Men, Innocent Men.

Answ.

And that we may the better understand the horrid na-
ture of this *Sin*, of *ensnaring Men*, or catching Men, in the
Text; Let us consider:

1. *What and who* are these Men-catchers?

Quest. 1.

2. *Of what* these Men-catchers make their Snares?

2.

3. *How and where* they lay their Snares?

3.

4. What is usually the *Effect and Issue* of this ensnaring
and catching of Men?

4.

1. *What and who* are these Men-catchers?

Quest. 1.

Some have thought by these Words (of the *Text*—*A-*
mong my People are found wicked Men, that set Snares and
catch Men) are meant *Catch-Poles, Bums, Spirits*, (so called
from their *spiriting Men* by catching them, and selling and
delivering them to Thrakdom and Bondage) *Villains to be*
sure.

Answ.

But these of the *Text* are *Villains* of a far deeper dye,
Scarlet-Rogues, Rogues upon Record, upon the greatest;
the truest and most antient Record, the Record of *Holy-*

Writ :

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Writ: These Men-catchers being called in the Text (by the Spirit of God that miscall's none, and never is guilty of any misnomer) wicked Men, or, as the Original imports, Rogues in Grain.

Committing the greatest Villanies *under colour of Truth*, and *Law*; that *Rob the Poor* (or Innocent) *because he is Poor*, (or Innocent) *and oppress the afflicted in the Gate*; (that is) in Courts of Judicature; which were then kept in the Gate House, or Gate of the chief Cities of Israel.

That commit the greatest Rapacities, Murders and Injustice, under the umbrage, pretence and colour of Law and Justice.

Wo be to them (saith the Prophet) that devise (or Plot) Iniquity, and work evil upon their Beds; when the Morning is light they practise it, because it is in the Power of their Hand.

And if Naboth have a good Vineyard, no wonder, if he be indicted of Treason in slandering or blaspheming God and the King; And two Sons of Belial (procured by that Woman Jezebel) to swear to the Indictment, if Jezebel or Ahab long for the pleasant Vineyard.

Wo be such (saith the Prophet) that covet Fields and take them by violence; and Houses, and take them away; so they oppress a Man and his House, even a Man and his Heritage.

This Sin of oppressing Men, or catching Men in Snares by false Witnesses, is that crying Sin, that brings God's heavy Judgments upon a Nation; that made him to withhold the former and the latter Rain in its Season; that always ruins a Kingdom, at least, it brings ruine at length upon the Oppressors, upon such Jezebel's, upon Ahab's; for so it follows in the Prophet Micah; *Therefore thus saith the Lord, Behold, against this Family do I devise an evil, from which ye shall not remove your Necks*; No, No, Jezebel's Neck was broke out of a Window presently after that Sin of Murder and Oppression under colour of Law; she did not long enjoy the Fruits of her Subornation of Perjury, but was thrown to the Dogs.

For

of Man-Catching.

9

For it is God's Truth, That He that oppresseth the Poor Prov. 22.
 to increase his Riches, and he that giveth to the Rich, shall surely 18.
 come to want. For Oppression and Robbery are so near of kin, Ezek. 22.
 that the Spirit of God puts them together, and makes them 29.
 signifie the same thing and the same Men: Only, the Oppres-
 sor robs by Law, the Robber robs against Law; the Op-
 pressor robs in the Gate under colour of Law, the Robber
 robs on the Kings High-Way in defiance of Law; both of them
 always (or at least most commonly) come to an ill end.

But these latter are little, Retail-Rogues in respect of the
 former, that rob (safely they think, and) by whole-sale, and
 brought God's heavy Judgment of Drought and Dearth
 upon the Nation of Israel, in the Text.

For a High-way-Man lyes at catch but for a small parcel
 of Money, but these (like the Grave) swallow all; the
 good, the bad, Life, Liberty, Estate, Family and Posterity,
 root and branch in one day. I mean, such as are
 Trepanners, or Countenancers of them; Sham-Evidence, False
 Witneses, whose Tongues can swear and unswear, whose
 Tongues perhaps have cut the Throats of many a poor In-
 nocent already, and still want more work, more work; Men
 of no Honour, no Honesty, no Religion; (except of that
 notorious and bloody Religion that is worse than no Re-
 ligion) you may have more Truth, more Kindness, more
 Fidelity, fairer quarter from Infidels (I know it) than from
 such Bigotted-Catholicks, that think it is Religion (and
 pleasing to God) to cut Men's Throats.

Which yet they do not, they dare not do always in the
 down-right Godfrey way of murdering; that (has and may)
 prove dangerous; no, the Devil is crafty, and his Agents
 and Emisaries can improve in Wit as well as Malice; They
 shall do the Feat, lay their Snares, catch Men, (not in the
 Night and be hang'd) but at Noon-day and by Law; not
 with cruel hands, but (a way worth two on't) with vene-
 rous Tongues, Tongues of a Serpent, the Poyson of Asps is

B

under

The Double Sin

under their Lips, they kill sure, no Law can hinder them; nay, they'll make the Law Pimp to them, and assist them in the Assassinate:

And that by false Oaths, false Tongues, swearing *pro and con*; as if those that will swear you twenty Oaths in an hour for *God-have-Mercy*, will scruple at one Oath for Money, and to have all their other Oaths and Sins pardoned into the Bargain.

Atheism, Blasphemy and Bigottism is now so epidemical and common, that therefore the *many* *Hollanders* in their Courts of Judicature pump out the Truth, *not by Oath*, but *cross* and sudden *Interrogatories*, in which (by use) their Judges are as dexterous as happy.

But by *False Oaths*, wicked Men can *do the Business*, do their *own Business*, get *Rewards* for catching innocent Men, and not always (though *sometimes*) the *Gallows*, also for their Pains, in setting *Snares to catch Men*.

These are the Men that *can also do any Man's Business*, how innocent soever; of these the Prophet *David* had Experience, woful Experience, though he was a *Man* (for Integrity) *after God's own Heart*:

And the good *Man* was at his *Wits end almost*, and knew not well how to deal with these Men-catchers; and therefore puts the question, as if he knew not how to resolve it, Saying—*What shall be given unto thee? or what shall be done unto thee, thou false tongue?*

As if he should say; How should I *stop thy Mouth*, thou false *Tongue*? answering in the next Verse, *sharp Arrows of the Mighty with Coals of Juniper*: as *he* should say;

Except the *Mighty God with Coals of Juniper* (the hottest Coals) *stop the Mouth* of these slanderous Tongues by his All-seeing Power (some unexpected Providence) vain is the help of Man.

Therefore he adds—*Who is me that I sojourn in Mesech*—amongst a Pack of Rogues, that will *say and swear any thing*;

thing; what help? He flies to God therefore and prays—and cries in this Distress—*Deliver my Soul, O Lord, from lying Lips, and from a deceitful Tongue.* Pſ. 120. 2.

And this Method he uses against these Trepanners, and Men-catchers, in *Pſal. 140. 141, 142.* making *these three Pſalms* against these dangerous Fellows, falling to his Prayers; and beginning with the *Letany*—*Deliver me, O Lord, from the evil Man, preserve me from the violent Man, (or the Men of Violence) which imagine Mischief in their Heart, continually are they gathered together (or conspiring or plotting) for War: And what War? what Bloodshed? not that of the Sword, but wicked Tongues, a sharper Weapon, and kills as sure; for he adds—*

They have sharpened their Tongues like a Serpent, Adder's Poyſon is under their Lips. Pſ. 140. 3. Selah; or, mark that.

And Verse 5. *The Proud have hid a Snare for me, and Cords, they have spread a Net by the way-side; they have set Grins for me.* Pſ. 140. 5. Selah. These are the Snare-layers, that watch for Men's Words to catch at them, that watch for Men's halting, as they did for the Prophet *Jeremy's*, when he heard *the defaming of many; Fear on every side, Report, say they, and we will report it;* Jer. 20. 10. with advantage no doubt, a Lye (like a Snow-Ball) seldom loses any thing in the tumbling up and down.

Thus in answer to the first Query, I have given you *the Character of a Man-Catcher;* and though I have not skill enough to pourtray and limn *this Limb* of the Devil, that would *Harraſs* Men out of their Lives and Estates, yet by what I have said, you cannot but look upon him as the *worst of Villains.*

Q. 2. Of what do these Men-catchers make their Snares? Quest. 2.

This Question is not so easily answered; for the Devil and his *Emissaries* tutor them and find them stuff to work upon, and if one Snare *break*, they'll to work again, and will try if *another will hold.* Anſw.

The Horrid Sin

They work with *Head and Heart*, Hand and Tongue and Pen, but always privily, in *private-Cabals* they plot their Work, fit their Engines, procure their Tools and Instruments and Engines; spare for no pains, no cost, not daunted with any ill success; like their Master *running to and fro, seeking whom they may devour*.

Either by down-right Murder and *Ravilliacks*, taking Men's Lives away; that Snare catches Men to purpose. It was a *Pope* that said on such an occasion, *a dead Dog bites not*.

But though these are *sure Snares*, yet there is *danger* in setting them, and *jeopardy* to boot; dangerous to the *Men-Hunters*, and *Men-Catchers*; murder will out, one time or other.

Therefore the surest way of catching Innocent Men, is *Jezebel's-way*, to make the *Law catch a Man*, (as Innocent *Naboth*) and kill him by the Testimony of some *Sons of Belial*; as aforesaid.

Some think, That this Sin of Catching, Trapping, Ensnaring and Trepanning Men by Sham-Plots and Sham-Swearers and false Swearers, is a *New-Mode*, lately Invented, and new come over *from beyond Seas*, as our *other new-Modes* and *Fashions*, and from *the same place* too:

But they are mightily mistaken, that think this Sin of ensnaring Men at this rate is a new Sin, and never (or but lately) invented and thought of, before this Age, so fruitful and luxuriant in monstrous Births and impious Productions.

For you see already that this Sin is older than my Text, an old Trick of the Devil, of *Jezebel*, of *Saul*, of *Ahab* *whom Jezebel his Wife stirred up*; no Sin more spoken of in Holy Scripture, no Sin had worse Consequence; for because of *Swearing* (the Prophet means, *Forswearing*, *Perjury* or *False-Swearing*) *the Land mourneth*; as well as for what goes before, namely, *the Land is full of Adulterers, and therefore also the Land mourneth*: And so the Prophet *Hosea* couples them together—*By Swearing, and Lying, and Killing,*

Jer. 23. 10.

Hos. 4. 2.

Killing, and committing Adultery, they break out, and Blood toucheth Blood.

The Original Word for *Blood* there, is in the plural number, to denote a great deal of Blood shed already by those *False-Swearers, Affidavit-Men* and *Men-catchers*, a *dangerous* as well as a *bloody Crew*.

Quest. 3. How and where do they lay these Snares? *Quest. 3.*

I answer, always in the *Dark, privily do they shoot, and* *Answ.*
fear not, for their Works are Works of Darknefs, their *Pfal. 11. 2.*
Engineer the Prince of Darknefs, and the Whore in the Re-
velations (that has *Mystery* writ in her Forehead) disci-
plines them in this Mystery of Iniquity, in laying Snares to *Pfal. 64. 5.*
catch Men.

But always they set their Snares *by Night* (I mean) *by dark,* *Pro. 1. 11.*
 they hope no Body sees them ; but he *that is higher than the* *Eccles. 5. 8.*
highest regardeth, and there are higher than they.

Holy *David* compares these lurking Catch-Poles, these
 Knights of the Post, (that wait in all Companies, and plye
 in all Assemblies) unto a *Lion lurking in his Den*, or in secret *Pf. 17. 12.*
 places, lying in wait privily and under some Covert (per-
 haps of the righteous Law) to catch Men, to catch their Prey.

Where Men walk, where Men talk, *by the way side,* says *Pf. 140. 5.*
David, they insinuate into all Companies, all Business, all
 Assemblies, where they can get admittance they are never
 out of their way ; catch at the Words of a Minister in the
 Pulpit, of a Judge upon the Bench, *laying Snares for him that*
reproveth in the Gate, trepanning their very Comrades, their
 Friends and Familiars, like *Jeremy's* Companions, *Jer. 20.*
10. All my Familiars waited for my halting, saying, Perad-
venture he will be enticed, and we shall prevail against him, and
we shall take our Revenge on him.

But this they always do with all Privacy imaginable, and
 perhaps under an *Oath of Secrecy*, to pump the deeper, un-
 der Colour of Friendship, or under colour of some doubt-
 ful Word that will bear two Sences, and they shall always
 take

take it in the *worst* Sence and the *wrong* Sence, and *inconsistent* in Sence, and incoherent with all former or subsequent Discourse, or make Additions, *Villanous Additions* of their own, these are the Dark-Lanthorn Men, that like *Faux*, walk with a Vizard on, the Vizard of Honesty, of Religion, Friendship, or, perhaps of good Fellowship, laying thus

Pf. 142. 3. *their Snares* secretly and in the Dark, *to catch Men*; Psal.

142. 3. *In the way* (saith Holy David, of my Employ, my Trade, my Business) *wherein I walked, have they privily laid a Snare for me.*

Quest. 4. Fourthly and Lastly, let us consider the *Issue and Effect* of these Catch-Poles, these Men-catchers, these *Judas-fes*, these Trepanners; (For I know, you would gladly see their Exit and Departure.)

Ans. They do not all (like *Judas* their Brother) hang themselves, otherwise than as their own Facts bring them to the Gallows, and the Pit they have digged for others they fall into themselves. Thus Holy David prayed against these Men, and no doubt but God Almighty heard his Prayers—*Grant not, O Lord, the desires of the Wicked, further not his wicked device, lest they exalt themselves. Selah.*

Pfal. 140. 8, 9. *As for the Head of those that compass me about, in the mischief of their own Lips cover them. Let the wicked fall into their own Nets, whilst that I withal escape.*

Pfal. 142. 6, 7. *Deliver me from my Persecutors, for they are stronger than I. Bring my Soul out of Prison, that I may praise thy Name.* It seems they had got the Holy Man into Gaol, these Men-catchers had catch'd him, and holed him, but could not hold him; he outlived the Malice of these Men-catchers.

But yet it is as true, that God in his secret Wisdom *does* suffer these Trepanners to prosper a while in their Roguery; and seems to hide his Eyes whilst his Beloved may be sore smitten in the place of Dragons, and be covered with the shadow of Death, though for his sake, they be killed all the day long, and are counted as Sheep for the Slaughter, whilst Almighty God

Pfal. 44. 19. 22, 23, 24. *smitten in the place of Dragons, and be covered with the shadow of Death, though for his sake, they be killed all the day long, and are counted as Sheep for the Slaughter, whilst Almighty God*

God seems to sleep, and cast them off for ever, hiding his Face, and forgetting their Affliction and their Oppression.

Whilst the Wicked say, Tush, God hath forgotten, he hideth his Face, he will never see it. Psa. 10. 11.

And, I fear, that *Atheism* and *Irreligion* is the great cause of these Evils of Swearing, Forswearing, Perjury and Blasphemy amongst us; together with that false Religion, that deems it lawful to do evil that good may come thereof; or, (however) can give a Pardon for the worst of Enormities and Villanies; nay, can Saint a Villain, a Clement, a Murderer, a *Ravillack* for murder and King-killing.

Betwixt this Religion and no Religion there goes but a pair of Sheers, they are all of a Piece, and the ground-work of this Religion and no Religion, is *one and the same*, *Atheism*, it is to be feared; The subtle Grandees and Engineers that set the bigotted Wheels at work, saying in their Heart, There is no God; as that Pope *Leo 10.* that was such a Fool as to discover his *Atheism*, in a jolly Fit, or to shew his Wit, and that he was above the foppish Ceremonies of that Superstition, could not forbear his villanous Poetry, in another place recited,

—*Hem! quantum reddit nobis hac fabula Christi!*

I am sure this Temper or Distemper of *Atheism* drew a great deal of Blood, good and bad, from *Israel* and *Judah*, and made their Iniquity to be exceeding great, and filled the Land full of Blood, and the City full of Injustice and Oppression: (for so the word *Perverseness* is rendered, *wresting of Judgment* in the Margent;) And the reason of these Mischiefs, is there given by the Prophet *Ezekiel*, at the latter end of the Verse, to be *Atheism*—For they say, The Lord hath forsaken the Earth, and the Lord seeth not. Like those in *Malachi*, that say, Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and he delighteth in them; or, Where is the God of Judg- Ezek. 9. 9.
Mal. 2. 1.

Judgment? Where? No where sure, saith the Atheist, or
 1 King 18. else he is like *Baal*, and busie, either he is talking, or he is
 27. pursuing, or is in a Journey, or takes a Nap at present, and
 sleepeth and must be awakened.

Poor Worms! Yet these are the Blades of our Times, and
 the Men of Valour, they dare strut, like those Gyants of
 old that bid Heaven Battel, and bid defiance to the God of
 Heaven, and blaspheme him to his Face, and if they ever
 pray to him, 'tis only in Jeer, as when they pray to God to
damn them, damn them:

All in good time; And yet these plumed Whiflers shall
 (like *Caligula*) seek a Cellar or Cave to hide their Heads in,
 when it does but Thunder, and their Hearts tremble and
 quake at every crack of Thunder:

Or, if Death do but stare them in the Face, through the
 Casement of Sickness, old Age, Pestilence, or in a Battel,
 then any Privy-hole or Hollow-Tree, is worth all the
 World to them, to hide their Heads in.

Ay, but like that *Egyptian*, King *Pharaoh*, let but their
 Fears be over, and their Lusts that rule them make them
 Atheists again, or willing to be Atheists again, and they
 strut again, and cry, damn them again, and the little Pea-
 cocks shream out and yawl amain, pluming themselves:

Exo. 9. 34. Thus when *Pharaoh* saw that the Rain, and the Hail, and
 the Thunders were ceased, he sinned yet more, and hardened his
 Heart, he and his Servants.

And Ple assure you, these People think themselves of the
 subtillest Mould of Mankind, Wits refin'd from the common
 Dreggs of Opinions, imbib'd in Infancy and a Religious
 Education, and are in all Men's Opinions (as well as their
 own) *no small Fools*. 'Tis a coarse Complement, I con-
 fess, to Men of their Pregnancy, but I learn'd it a long
 time ago in my Psalter, *The Fool hath said in his Heart, there*
 Psal. 14. 1. *is no God.*

He cannot say so in his Head, if there be any Brains in
 it,

See after Page 20

it, or any Eyes to see (the Earth, the Heavens, the Sun, the Moon, the Stars, that keep their Courses, whose Mover and Maker is God) but *he says so in his Heart*, (that is) *he wishes and prays so in his Heart*, that there were no God.

God (there) in the Original is *Elohim*, not *Jehovah*. *Jehovah* signifies God, as he is Eternal and Self-Existent; but *Elohim* signifies God as he is a Judge, and so this Psalmist uses the Word in Psalm. 82. 6. *I have said ye are Gods; Elohim*, Judges or Magistrates.

Thus the Fool could be content there was a *Jehovah*, a Psalm. 82. 6.
good and merciful God; but he cannot in his Heart (which accuses and condemns him) desire an *Elohim*, which is greater than our Heart, and knoweth all things, even the Secrets of the Heart, the secret Plottings, Conspiracies, Perjuries, and black Villanies hatch'd in Hell, and in the dark, and the most secret Adulteries, Sodomies, and Abominations not to be named, whilst the Atheistical Committers of these Impieties, like those Antients of the House of Israel, that did their Idolatry in the dark, *every Man in the Chambers of his Imagery; for they say, The Lord seeth us not, the Lord hath forsaken the Earth.* Ezek. 8. 12.

Then said he unto me, Hast thou seen this, O Son of Man? Is it a light thing to the House of Judah, that they commit the Abominations which they commit here? Ezek. 8. 17.

For they have filled the Land with Violence, and have returned to provoke me to Anger: and lo, they put the Branch to their Nose.

Therefore will I also (saith God) deal in fury; mine Eye shall not spare, neither will I have Pity, and though they cry in mine Ears with a loud Voice, yet will I not hear them.

Therefore go dance, you Atheists! and ye that Curse, and damn, swear and forswear, and kick up your heels at Heaven, go dance, like Murderers in a Goal (with your Shackles on) and think every day a play-day till the Assizes come.

Isa. 28. 15; 18.

Go Rant, and damn your selves, and say with your Brethren (in *Isaiah*) *We have made a Covenant with Death, and with Hell are we at agreement.*

When the overflowing Scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us; for we have made Lies our Refuge, and under falsehood have we hid our selves: But, your Covenant with Death shall be dissolved, and your agreement with Hell shall not stand; when the over-flowing Scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be troden down by it.

One would think that no Man should be so Purblind and Beetle-brow'd as to be an Atheist; who can chuse but they must visibly see God's Almighty hand stretched out, in Judgments, in Mercies, in overthrowing a mighty Oppressor, and perhaps by a *Jehu*, as very an Oppressor as he that he overthrew, and treading in the same arbitrary and tyrannical Oppression, and in the very steps of his Predecessor, down tumbles he too; and this *divine Justice* is visible to any Man of Observance or common-Understanding; the Heathen's called this Divine Vengeance—*Nemesis*; and the Heathen Poet could not but observe it, when he said—

Raro antecedentem Scelerum deseruit pœna pede claudo.

The Gouty Judg comes limping, makes no haste;
But he'll strike home and heavy at the last.

Isa. 26. 11

Lord, (saith the Prophet) when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see: but they shall see and be ashamed for their Envy to wards thy People, the Fire of thine Enemies shall devour them.

But Words are lost, and much more Holy Scripture Words are lost on these stout Hectors, Atheists, false Witnesses, Men-Catchers, Catch-Poles and Sham-Evidence.

God bless us all from them, and grant we may never come into their Clutches, or within the reach and probability of
their

their Oaths, *their Oaths, the Snares* wherewith they catch Men, many honest Men, useful Men ; nay *therefore* these Men-catchers lay their Snares and their Oathing-Gins to catch them ; because they are honest and useful, and stand just in the way to hinder their villanous Plots and Designs,

Well, go on, and swear and damn your selves to the Pit of Hell, and let Men persuade you there's no such thing as Hell ; at worst, but a kind of Purgatory, (a certain refining Crucible, only to take away our Dross) and for a little Mony, or killing two or three Hereticks, and that warm Hot-House too may be avoided.

Make these Lyes your Refuge, and under these falsehoods hide your selves, there's little hopes to convert a *Judas*, they'll be hang'd first or hang themselves first, as he did, and damn themselves first, it is to be feared.

Oh ! but they'll say, It is a difficult thing to prove a Rogue perjur'd, and an Affidavit-Man, and an Evidence shall find Favor and Friends, 'tis hopeful ; and if we swear (say they) to catch and trap a Man out of his Life and Estate, we are upon our Oaths, (*so are they every hour of the day but when they sleep*, but no sooner awake, but the first is a Prayer to God, Damn me) none can contradict us, the Jury is bound to believe us (*whether they will or no, and in spite of their Heart and Conscience*) they must go according to their Evidence, (*Yes, yes, the Juries well know their Duty, well know you and your Evidence too*) none know to the contrary, is not an Oath an Oath ?

Yes, Yes, an Oath is an Oath, and an honest Man's Oath is intended for the *decision of all Strife* ; an Oath is not to make Strife, nor to draw Blood, nor to drill Men out of their Estates and Honors. And though none know to the contrary, but God Almighty ; yet they go on and say, *Before Death and the day of Judgment, we'll repeat and get a Pardon from our Ghostly Father* ; nay, perhaps they have one before hand in their Pockets, *sub Sigillo Piscatoris, vel Sacerdotis.*

The Horrid Sin

But your Ghostly Father, nor their Father--*Pa-Pa-Pater Patrum*, cannot deliver the false-Swearers and Men-catchers from the just Judgment and Discovery of the Father of Spirits, who protests he will be both *Judge* and *Jury* and *Witness* too, against the false Swearers, Adulterers and Oppressors, *Mal. 3. 5. I will come near to you to Judgment, and I will be a swift Witness against the Sorcerers, and against the Adulterers, and against false Swearers, and against those that oppress the Hireling in his Wages, the Widdow and Fatherless, and that turn aside the Stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the Lord of Hosts.*

What is Man, or Men, without the comfort of Society? what Commerce or Felicity in the World without Society be secur'd? Away---ye *Pests* to all Society, away---ye that are the Plague of Mankind and all Commerce; who can be safe, if a severe course be not taken with ye *Judas-es*, that betray innocent Blood? Repent; Repent, as your Brother *Judas* did, and say with him, *I have sinned in betraying innocent Blood*, and restore the thirty pieces of Silver, the price of Blood, but make not the Kingdom an *Akeldama*, or Field of Blood.

I do not say that all sins are crying sins, and bring Judgments on a Kingdom and Nation, but this sin of Injustice and Oppression under colour of Law and Justice, by false Swearing and Sham-Evidence, catching and trapping men, is certainly a *crying sin*, and brought God's Judgments, his dreadful Judgments upon *Sodom*, the cry of whose sins was so loud as to reach up to Heaven, *Gen. 18. 20, 21.*

And what were the Sins of *Sodom*? mark them well, as the Prophet *Ezekiel* numbers them to the Men of *Israel* to make them beware.

As I live saith the Lord God, Sodom thy Sister hath not done, she nor her Daughters, as thou hast done, thou and thy Daughters. Behold, this was the Iniquity of thy Sister Sodom; Pride, fulness of Bread, and abundance of Idleness

was.



was in her, and in her Daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy.

So that even withdrawing of Justice, or oppressing the needy, is a crying Sin, and destroyed Sodom, and Israel too.

Therefore this Sin of false-Swearing, and Oppression, or catching Men by the Oaths of Catch-Poles and Sham-Evidence, has been an old sin, that ruin'd King *Ahab* and Queen *Jezebel*, almost ruin'd their Kingdom by a great Drought, it rained not for the space of three years, so that there was a Famine and Mortality, they had scarce any Grass or Water to keep the rest of the Beasts alive. 1 Kings 18. 5.

Indeed this Sin, though a common (too too common Sin) is seldom touch'd upon in Pulpits, though none more declaim'd against in Holy Writ ; some Ministers will not, and some cannot, and some dare not give these Devils their due, by a just and sharp Reproof, I mean these false Swearers, Catch-Poles, and Sham-Plotters, and Sham-Evidence, that lay their Snares privily to catch Men.

Let Papists call this a *Venial Sin*, we know 'tis *Mortal*, 'tis *Fatal*, 'tis a crying Sin.

How conscientious was good *Samuel* to assail himself of this Sin before all the People, before he left his Office of chief Magistrate, though not in the least Guilty, 1 Sam. 12. 3. Behold, here I am; witness against me before the Lord, and before his Anointed: Whose Ox have I taken? or whose Ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I received any Bribe to blind mine Eyes therewith? And I will restore it you.

And they said, Thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken ought of any Mans Hand.

And he said unto them, The Lord is Witness against you, and his Anointed is Witness this day, that ye have not found ought in my hands, And they answered, He is Witness.

What care was here to get a publick and general acquittance (that he had not exercised Arbitrary Government,

Inju-

The Horrid Sin.

Injustice, Fraud or Oppression) before he left his place: Is not this better than to be turned out for these Crimes? and become the *common odium* and object of the People's Hatred and just Indignation, besides the stings and stigmatizings of a gaulded and wounded Conscience.

*Spoken to the
Mayor and Al-
dermen then
present.*

And therefore you that are Magistrates have a fair Example here, as well as fair warning, against all Injustice, Fraud, Oppression and Wrong; or countenancing and abetting all unjust or Sham-Prosecutions, plotted by wicked Men (that make no Conscience of a thousand Oathes) and yet can ensnare and catch Men by virtue of one Oath, to the ruine of Life, Liberty, Estate and Posterity.

Ila. 1. 17.

Seek Judgment, relieve the Oppressed, judge the Fatherless, plead for the Widdow.

Psal. 12. 4.

What though these Catch-Poles or Catch-men say, as their Brethren did, Psal. 12. 4. With our Tongue will we prevail, our lips are our own: Who is Lord over us? And yet this lawless Wretch is described two Psalmes before to be one, whose mouth is full of Cursing and deceit and fraud; under his Tongue is Mischief and Vanity, (Heb. Iniquity.)

*Psal. 10. 7, 8, 9,
10, 11, 12.*

He sitteth in the lurking places of the Villages, in the secret places doth he murder the Innocent, his Eyes are privily set against the Poor.

He lyeth in wait secretly, as a Lion in his Den, he lyeth in wait to catch the Poor when he draweth him into his Net.

He croucheth and humbleth himself, that the Poor may fall by his strong ones.

He hath said in his Heart, God hath forgotten, he hideth his Face, he will never see it.

Arise, O Lord, O God, lift up thine hand, forget not the Humble. (Heb. humbled or afflicted.)

And God heard this Prayer; for *Psal. 12. 5.* we read --

For the oppression of the Poor, for the sighing of the Needy, now will I arise (saith the Lord) I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him, (Heb. Him that would ensnare him.)

Though

Though I had not read it to you this Morning in the *Second Lesson*, (so fresh in your Memories,) yet there are few of you but know, that there was a *Plot*, a Horrid Plot and Conspiracy by the Chief Priests and Scribes against our Blessed Redeemer's Life, and *willing enough they were to kill him, but they feared the People.* Luk. 22. 2.

Wherefore they resolved he should suffer by the Law of the Land, for *Treason*, in Perverting the Nation, and forbidding to give Tribute to *Cesar*, &c. Luk. 23. 2.

But how shall they prove the Indictment?

Why that's the easiest thing in the World; it is but *looking out* (and they are always at Hand) *some Knights of the Post*, some false Affidavit-Men, Catch-Poles, and false Evidence, and the Sham-Plot is perfect, the Indictment prov'd, and the business done.

Therefore all Heads to work, especially the Chief-Priests (they must be in at a dead lift) and Elders, and *all the Council sought false Witnesses against Jesus to put him to Death.* Mat. 26. 59.

But found none: yea, though many false Witnesses came, yet found they none. (That was hard, but) *at the last came two false Witnesses.*

And these did the Business, for which they came, for which they were hired, and they were *Cesar's* Evidence, and swore for *Cesar*, and swore the Matter home; And these Catchers carried the Cause, against the greatest Innocence.

Mighty glad (no doubt) were the Chief Priests, and Elders and Counsel; and mightily cared and much made of were these Two Sham-Evidences and false Witnesses that swore home; especially, after the former false Witnesses miscarried in the attempt, as not having got their Lesson sufficiently by Heart. They had need be Men of Cunning and Ability that can swear thorow-stitch and cleverly, mixing some Truth and probable Circumstances amongst many, and amongst the main-Lie: There is Art in Daubing,

From:

From a Lyon, a Tyger, a Wolf or a Serpent, we may make some Defence and Provision, but this kind of Snake is *Anguis in Herba*, no Foresight, no Caution, no Prudence, no Innocency can defend from the Sting of this forked venomous and murdering Tongue, except a man abandon all Society with Mankind.

'Tis true, Men may keep these Snakes (and but perhaps neither) out of their Bed-Chambers, scarcely out of their Houses: however not out of Publick Houses, Churches, Courts of Judicature, Exchanges and Publick Assemblies; so that if they can but bring good proof for the Circumstances, as that they were at such a time in such a Church, Assembly, Exchange, Publick Meeting, in Court, City or Country, *let them alone to witness* what they heard there.

These (I say) are the great Plague, the *none such Pests* of all Society, the *common-Nuisance*: no former Age (that I read of) can parallel ours for improvement of Vice and Mischief: What Block-heads were the *French-Men's* Ancestors in the *Art of Poisoning*, in comparison of the *present Skill* and Dexterity? What Block-heads were the *Irish*, the *native Irish*, in all Arts and Mysteries imaginable, in former Ages? But now how ingenious (though some of them are but Bunglers still, and enough to destroy a neat, well laid, and well contriv'd Plot in the Management, for want of Skill in a subtle Intrigue.) But time and good *Tutors* may improve them, if there be first a willing mind.

Tell not me of Conscience and Religion, when Men make it a matter of Conscience and Religion to catch Men by false Oathes, and so cut their Throats! *Will you call this Religion, and an acceptable day to the Lord?*

Isa. 58. 5, 6.

Is not this the Religion that I have chosen? to loose the bands of Wickedness, to undo the heavy Burden, and to let the Oppressed go free, and that ye break every Toak?

Thus have I entertained you an Hour, with my Meditations, not without some reluctancy (I profess;) for I design'd

sign'd not 'till this Morning to preach upon my former Text, having the last Lords Day left it abruptly for want of time: but I could not fix my Meditations nor Heart upon any other Text than this.

I am no *Enthusiast*, to fancy that every conceit of mine, or warmth of Thought, is an impulse of the Holy Ghost; nor yet such a *Libertine*, as to neglect all observation of the secret and vehement Impulses of God's Spirit, and his holy Communion with our Spirits. And I have often experimentally found (at other times) upon the like short previous Pre-meditation, the *good success thereof* upon the Auditory, hoping and praying that what in this Sermon wants of mine or Man's Abilities, may be supplied by that *Holy Spirit*, that best teacheth us to profit. *To whom with the Father and Son be Glory for ever. Amen.*

A

FINIS.

THE

THE
POSTSCRIPT
 TO THE
READERS.

ANd now, *Gentle Readers*, if ever I had need to beg your Candour, or to make an Apology for publishing a crude Sermon, now is the time.

For as it is true, that I had not so much as short Notes when I preach'd it, nor time to make them ; so, as near as my Memory serves me, I have set down *verbatim* (at least the Substance of) what I preach'd ; writing immediately what I preach'd, whilst fresh in my Memory, and so sent it the next day by a special Messenger to the Press.

You'll say, perhaps, why ? *What haste ?* If this had never been Printed, or Printed seven years hence, it is soon enough.

And all may be ; For neither in the Preaching, nor Publishing, had I the least Reflection to hit any particular Man alive.

But I know the Sin of *setting Snares to catch Men* is so common (*too too common* God knows) in these Days ; such Shamming and Trepanning, that scarce an honest Man in *England* of any Eminency, but has or may have cause to say with Holy *David*. — *Every day they wrest my Words,*
all

all their Thoughts are against me for Evil.

If this Discourse then be but *commoda ut accomoda*, as profitable as seasonable, I have my end and only aim; purposely waving in this Sermon all vain Rhetorical Flourishes, idle or elaborate Quotations, much more that scenical gaping, or endeavour at Wit, Pun or Quibble, so much admir'd by the Humming-Tribe.

In which little Arts I have no Skill, and less Will; as thinking no Rhetorick nor Quotations comparable to that and those in Holy Writ; leaving to Pulpit-Stagers, the little Hitts, Hintings and Glances at Wit, unbecoming the Gravity and Grandeur of a Divine, and better besitting the Levity of a Stage, or a Barber's Shop, than the sacred Pulpit.

And as I have no Malice against any Man alive; so I do not know nor believe that I have an Enemy in the World, but such as are so, upon the same Score, and for the same Reason, with which St. Paul upbraids the bewitched and foolish Galatians, *Am I therefore become your Enemy because I tell you the Truth?* Gal. 3. 1. Gal. 4. 16.

Some think our Divisions and Distractions are so great, that they will not find a *shorter Period*, than the Wars and Miseries of Greece: of the end whereof the Oracle of Apollo (being consulted) replied,—*They should surcease when they should double the Altar at Delos*; which was Cubique-form. Whereupon all Hands went to work in haste to add another Altar to the old one, of a like Cubique-Form to it; but to little Purpose, for the Miseries abated not a whit.

But Plato better expounded the riddling God, telling them, the Oracle meant, *They should never have end*; for the doubling a Cube in Solids, is (as the Quadrature of a Circle in Plano amongst Geometricians, or as the Philosophers Stone, amongst the vain-promising and vain-boasting Chymists) never (alas!) never to be found out.

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Yet I have other Thoughts, more Faith, and better Hope that our Distractions will find a happy Conclusion, and the Death of the Plots and Sham-Plots in good time be *suborn'd, sounded* to the bottom, and discovered; yet, truly, I think, (as is said of the Altar at Delos) a period and end of our Distractions is impossible, 'till all *Popish Altars, Popish Hopes, and Popish Claim* (by the Pope and his *Emissaries*) to these three Kingdoms of *England, Scotland and Ireland*, and the propagation of his Superstition amongst us be extirpate and rooted out, nay, Root and Branch: for there *always were* Plots, Popish Plots, in the Reigns of all our Kings, ever since the Pope's Supremacy and Usurpations have been rejected; and whilst there is a *fair prospect and hopes* of Redemption of this *Golden-Fleece*, (though they be *but Glimpses*) Popish Plots and Conspiracies cannot possibly cease, nor the *English, Scottish and Irish-Papists*, cease their Assistance and Conspiracies, except they apostatize from the Principles of Popery.

Do they not all follow the Fathers of the *Council of Trent*, into which nota Man was admitted to Vote, 'till he had taken this Oath—

Extra: de
jure ju-
rand,
Ego. N.

Ego N. &c. *Papatum Romanæ Ecclesiæ & regulas Sanctorum Patrum adjutor ero ad defendendum & retinendum, salvo ordine meo, contra omnes Homines.* In English thus.

I N. &c. will be an Assistant, to defend and maintain the Papacy of the Church of Rome, and the Commands of the Holy-Fathers (*the Popes of Rome*) against all Men Living.

How *inconsistent* is this Oath with the Oath of Allegiance and Supremacy? How *impossible to reconcile* these two Oaths? How impossible for a Man to be a *right and true Papist*, and at the same time a *right and true Subject* to a Protestant Prince!

For

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29

For which cause (no doubt it was) made Treason (by the Statutes 23 *Eliz.* cap. 1. and 3 *Jacob.* 4. In the Reigns of those two wise Princes) not only to persuade the King's Subjects (bred and educated in the Protestant Religion) to apostatize and turn Papists; but the very Apostates themselves are Traitors—declared in these very Words.

—And if any Person shall after the end of this Session of Parliament, by any means be willingly absolved, or with-drawn, as aforesaid, or willingly be reconciled, (to the Romish Religion before recited) or shall promise any Obedience to any such pretended Authority, Prince, State or Potentate, as is aforesaid; that then every such Person, their Procurors and Counsellors thereunto, being thereof lawfully Convicted, shall be taken tryed and adjudged, and shall suffer and forfeit, as in Cases of High-Treason.

Then the said Statute (which see at large) makes it imprisonment of Treason wittingly to aid or maintain such an Apostate, or conceal his Offence twenty days together, without discovering it to a Justice of Peace, or other High Officer: nay, he shall pay an hundred Marks, and be imprisoned a Year, that shall willingly bear Mass: As it follows in the said Statute.

And by the said Statute *tertio Jacobi* 3. The Apostate to the Romish Religion shall be indicted, tryed and proceeded against as a Traitor, either at the Assizes and Gaol Delivery of the County, for the time being; or before the Justices of the Court of Kings-Bench.

So careful have our Kings and Parliaments been to brand that Julian, that (being educated in an honest and true Religion built upon Holy Writ) should be such a Fool or Knave, or Atheist (for one of the three, or all of the three, such

an

The Postscript.

an Apostate must be) to change such a Religion, for a Superstition forged and invented by *Prelatical Pride and Rapacity*.

For the *maintenance whereof*, all their pious Frauds and Cheats, all their lying Miracles, Indulgencies, Purgatories, Limbus's, Crofles, Images, *Agnus Dei's*, Holy Water, Masses, Canonizations, Prayers to Saints, baptizing of Bells, Excommunications, Fulminations, Inquisitions, burning of Hereticks, Massacres, Fopperies, Plots and Sham-Plots are calculated, design'd and contriv'd.

I do not think that every *silly Papist* knows these things; for they (*poor Puppets!*) dance, creep to the Cross, cringe, bow, drop Beads, cross themselves, sprinkle themselves with Holy Water, mumble their *Ave's*, and *show tricks as the Masters of the Puppet Play*, with Wiers (*within the Curtain*) adulate them; and make them *frisk* so ridiculously, *curvet* and shew such *Gambolls* in Religion, especially at *Processions* (which I have seen in *Portugal*) that the soberest Countenance cannot forbear a Smile, mixt with Pity.

But there's never a *Jesuit* amongst them, *Pope*, nor *Cardinal*, but knows that *I here write God's Truth*: And cannot forbear *laughing among themselves* at these Frauds; only, they sanctify these Cheats with a *mollifying* Epithete, calling them—*Pious Frauds*.

I know, 'tis hard, very hard, for even a rational Man to emancipate himself and his Reason out of the Hands and Tyranny of Superstitions, suck'd in with our Mother's Milk, and imbib'd by Education: And therefore, I rather *prize* than blame a silly Papist, Man or Woman, brought up in such Superstitions: Which are as ridiculous as that of the *Indians* of the Island of *St. Thomas*, that fight it out to Death to this day, to decide which is the *right Elephant's Tooth* that fell from Heaven; whilst the wise laugh or pity them, judging (aright) that both the *pretendably-Divine*
and

and Heavenly Fangs came from the Jaw-bone of the Beast.

I therefore have compassion for these Bigots; but none for a Protestant, (that in defiance of Truth) shall apostatize therefrom, and run to these thick Skull'd Vanities; for which gross Perversion (not Conversion) the Apostate cannot so much as pretend the delusion of Education; but quite contrary; (I say) such a Julian Apostate, must either be an Atheist, and so, of no Religion; or some silly foolish Bigot that understands not the Principles of any Religion; or else has conceiv'd some monstrous and bloody Stratagem and Plot, impossible to be brought forth, but by the sole Midwisery of such bloody Hands and Bloody Religion; no other Religion can possibly do the Feat. In such case, I confess, there is a necessity for such an Apostate to defy and forsake Protestant Principles; and the Protestant Religion.

For did ever any wise or honest Man espouse and wed a Religion (to which he was not pre-contracted, and in Infancy drawn in and cajol'd) till acquaintance first had with that Religion he weds?

And do not all the learned and authentick Romish Doctors assert, and hold publickly in their Printed Writings and Books, that—*Papa potest dispensare contra jus Naturale*; The Pope can, dispense with the Laws of Nature, (that's pretty well to begin with) *contra Canones Apostolorum*; he can dispense with the Rules of the Apostles: And, *contra formam verborum in Baptismo*, with the Form of the words in Baptism; (How they improve! but let them go on.) Others say, The Pope can dispense *contra Jus Divinum, contra novum Testamentum*; others, *de omnibus preceptis veteris & novi Testamenti, contra Epistolas Pauli, &c.* too many to enumerate. Some of them assert, That the Pope can dispense with Divine Right, and can dispense with and against the New-Testament; others, with the Epistles of St. Paul; others, that the Pope can dispense with the Precepts both of the Old and New Testament.

De majori
virate &
obedientia.
15. q. 6.
Auctoritas
tatem.
In glossa
Distinct.
82. Pref.
byter.
Felin. de
confess.
cap.
Statuta
canon.
Colum. 6.
q. 1.
Quicunque
In glossa
Panorm.
cap. Extra
de divor.
ria. sum.
Angel. in
dictione.
Pap.

Possess

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Possess with these devilish Principles, therefore have their famous Doctors reviled and blasphemed the Holy Word of God.

Pigghius
Hierarch.
l. 3. cap. 3.
fol. 103.

Which *Albertus Pigghius* calls (*Nasus cereus, qui se horsum, illorsum, & in quamcumq; volueris partem, trahit, retrahi, fingit, facile permittit*) a Nose of Wax, that easily suffers it self to be drawn backward and forward, this way and that way, and any way; and in his third Controversy concerning the Church, (he saith) *sunt enim Scriptura muti Judices*, The Scriptures are dumb Judges.

Pigghius
Contro. 3.
de Eccle-
sia.

Did not *Ludovicus*, a Canon of the Church of *Lateran*, in the late *Concenvicle* (or Council of *Trent*) without Re- proof, in an Oration, assert, that *Scriptura est quasi mortuum Aramentum*, The Scripture is dead In?

Flaccus
Illyricus
in Norma
Concil.

And his Blasphemy confirm'd by the Bishop of *Poytiers* in the same *Convent*, saying, *Scriptura est res inanimis & muta, sicut etiam sunt reliqua Leges Politice*; The Scripture is a dead and dumb thing, as all other Politick Laws.

Johan. -
Sleidanus.
lib. 23.

No wonder therefore, that Cardinal *Hofius*, the Pope's Legate, and President of the said Council of *Trent*, answered with as much *Impiety* as *Scurrility* to that Objection (namely that King *David*, being no Bishop, yet had writ- ten the Book of *Psalms*) answered—*Quid mi scriberet? Scribimus indocti & doctique Poemata possum*; Why should he not write? (quoting a Verse out of *Horace*.)

Hofius l. 2.
contra
Johann. 1.
Brentium.

The learned Poets, Songs indite;
Th'unlearned too, do Ballads write.

Ludovicus
vives in
lib. 13. de
Christate
Dei. c. 14.

No wonder also neither, that *St. Paul* cannot pass by them without a Jeer and Scoff: *Augustinum vetustus sua metitur; qui si revivisceret cum Paulo, certe ille contemptus esset Rhetoriculus, aut Grammaticulus; Paulus vero vel infans vel Hæreticus videretur*. *Augustine* is safe now because of his Antiquity: But if he and *Paul* were alive again, he would be

be contemptible as a pittiful Rhetorician, and poor Grammarian ; But *Paul* would be accounted a mad Man or an Heretick.

Whereas they hold that the Pope is *alter Deus in Terrâ* ; God upon Earth : and others say, *Christus in Cælo præsidet, Papa in Terris residet*, Christ is Prince in Heaven, the Pope on Earth : Nay their Hebrew Gloss, upon Deut. 17. 11. says, *Si dixerint tibi quod dextra sit sinistra, aut quod sinistra sit dextra, talis sententia tenenda est* ; if they (*the Pope and his Emissaries*) tell thee that thy right Hand is thy left Hand, or thy left Hand is thy right Hand, yet you ought to believe them, and be of that Opinion.

Nicol.
Lyra. in
Deutero.
c. 17. 17.

(But is it not as safe to say—I Believe in God ?)

Another says, *Sit ergo Domina nostra Roma Baculus in Aquâ fractus, absit tamen ut crederem quod viderim*.

Let our Mistress *Rome* be a Stick that in the Water seems crooked, yet God forbid, that I should believe my own Eyes.

No Man therefore (I say) can be a Papist, but he whose Eyes are blinded by Education ; or, he who puts his own Eyes out by Atheism : For their own Books discover them palpably. To Instance but in one Passage more, mentioned in the Life of Pope Clement. 5. *Hic fuit publicus Fornicator. Ab eo tempore defecit omnis Disciplina, & Religio in Cardinalibus, & tres Radices vitiorum, Superbia, Avaritia, Luxuria, validissimè dominantur*.

Paral.
Ursper.
Gen. 11.
Clemen. 5.
Pap.

He (Pope Clement) was an arrand Whore-Master, publick and common ; And from that time forth, all kind of Discipline and Religion failed amongst the Cardinals ; especially three roots of Vices flourished amongst them, *Pride, Covetousness and Lechery*.

Thus we see the Successors of St. Peter can deny their Lord and Master, as stoutly as ever did St. Peter himself ; but *be* with Repentance, these without repenting.

The Postscript.

And how Men of these Principles *can be true to God or Man*, to any Protestant Prince or Protestant Neighbour, let the World judg; except they defy the Pope and the Devil, and all their Works of Popish and Hellish Darknes, Plots and Designs. And I think I am not at all herein strait-lac'd in my Charity, though I must expect *never the fairer quarter* from them for this Declaration.

But where is our true *Christian*, true *Protestant* and true *English Courage* now become? Who, (but he that's *unfit to live*) would *fear to die in and for* so just a Cause?

Better a thousand times (*if possible*) to die a *true Protestant*, and a *true English Man*, by the *Sham-Plots*, False Witnessess, and Popish Machinations; than willingly to *enslave a Man's self*, and Posterity, Soul, Body, Honour, Honesty, Religion and Estate, to *Arbitrary and Popish Sway*; I put them together, for (like *Hippocrates-Twins*) they are *born and live and die together*.

Does not Pope Boniface himself, with as little Modesty as Truth, assert *his Universal Power over all Nations*, as well in Temporals as Spirituall, from that Scripture, Luk. 22. 38. Behold, here are two Swords; no jot to his Purpose, nor the least colour more than the *bare sound* of the Words; (*two Swords*;) which were no *Allegorical* nor *Metaphorical*, (but plain *travailing*) Swords of *Ammunition-Hilt and Blade*.

And yet *this Usurper* (though he can show no Warrant, no Commission nor Authority for his Claim, from Christ or Holy Scripture; yet, like another late *Usurper*) he can lay his Hand upon the *Hilt* of his two Swords (*Spirituall and Temporal*) and cry, *This is my Commission*.

For if his *Temporal Sword* (which is no *small one*;) be too short; then he unsheaths his *Spirituall Sword*, and with *Fulminations, Excommunications, Curfes and Anathemas*, with Bell, Book and Candle, he huffs and swaggers; roars, rants, hectors and blusters all Mankind, that either fear his

his vain *Thunderings*, or come *within the dint* of his *Thunderbolts*.

To keep up therefore this usurped Power, or to regain it, where lost, *there is*, and ever *will be* Popish Plots, when and where there are *any blooming hopes* to accomplish them in any Protestant Kingdom whatsoever.

They are not now, (though they have been) much troubled with these Popish Plots in *Sweden* and *Denmark*; wherefore ? I'll tell you ;

For *two Reasons* ; *One is*, that the Laws against Papists are so fully put in Execution, *without connivance* ; that I have rid a hundred Miles together in those Countries, and could not (upon Inquiry) hear of one known and profess'd Papist.

2. *Another Reason is*, (and they have found it, by *Experience*, a most incomparable Remedy) They *guel* all the Popish Priests they catch in their Kingdoms and Dominions.

They *used to hang them* formerly, but that would not do; for the hopes of being Canoniz'd and Sainted (as Martyrs) drill'd some silly Priests thither ; 'till a *converted Nun* (I know not from *what Experience*) persuaded Authority, to *guel* all the Popish Priests they took.

They took her Advice, and it proves a wonderful Cure and Remedy against propagation of Popery in these Kingdoms.

I say therefore, 'tis senceless to doubt *the being of a Popish Plot*, that *never ceas'd* (since the Reign of *Hen. 8.*) in *England* ; but now by *Coleman's Letters* it infallibly appears, that they never had *such blessed hopes* of converting these three Kingdoms, since the *Bone-fires* in *Smithfield* in *Queen Mary's Days*, as now, now at this time, now that—

And *the more impudently* they deny so clear a Truth, the more cause we have to *abominate the Villany* of that Religion,

on, that hardens Men in *Lies or Equivocations* even to *Death*; And the more they deny it, after such apparent and manifold Conviction, the more suspicious and dangerous it is, by the combined endeavour to conceal it, and to turn the Edge thereof upon the Protestants.

2 Kings 6.
18.

Thus the Prophet did first *blindfold the Syrians*, and then how easily did he lead them into the *Enemies Camp*.

And indeed no Man can deny but 'tis politickly and craftily done, to endeavour to *put out the Eyes of those Men*, that are most quick-sighted to *discern their dark* mysterious and hellish Intrigues: Or, if they could but be *Godfrey-diz'd, strangl'd, hang'd or stab'd*, the Business would be done as effectually, and to all Intents and Purposes.

Especially, if the Sham-Evidences would but be improv'd and manag'd, with some *Lawyer's Hackney-Tongue*, whose Conscience is so often sold *pro* and *con*, right or wrong, for *Plaintiff* or *Defendant* (who bids most, and who comes first) prostituted and set to sale, (when Merchandize is indifferently and equally made of Truth and Falshood) the Snare of catching Men would be the stronger, and the Feat more currant. But that honest *English* Juries do know that a *Hackney-Tongue* is no Slander, and they'll believe them no further than they list; They have heard them so often bawle, babble and bluster, so loud and clamorous for *Plaintiff* one day, for *Defendant* another, that no wise Man heeds them; but knows that Words are but Wind, Windy Words (from *Hackney-Tongues*) as empty and variable as the Wind; but that it costs more to buy such Winds, than it does the becalmed Mariners in the *Baltick-Sea*, when they (as I have sometimes known them) buy a Wind of a *Lapland-Witch*.

But ('tis observable) that this *Hackney Wind*, as well as the other, is usually fatal to all that buy them, ending in a *Wreck*, at least, a *repented Bust* and *Storm*.

Whilst

Whilst these *Merchants of Truth and Falshood*; Merchants of Law, and sometimes of very little or no Law, (but with) the same *Hackney Tongues*, vilify and disgrace all that stand in their way, without respect to *their own Modesty* (I thank you, some of them *have none*!) without respect to Ingenuity, common Civility, or good Manners, without respect to any Man's *Worth or Quality* (except they expect a *Fee from them*, for that alone opens and shuts the *Breath-seller's Mouth*) they cannot open, but *Dirt* flies out to bespatter, as if they had got a *Priviledg* or Patent to be the *Common-Shoars*, and common *Filth*, common Slanderers, under the colour of a *Fee*, and under the *Protection* of a *Motley* or *Button-Gown*.

Nay, (I know it, and will maintain it for a great Truth) that a Gentleman's Credit and Estate, Life and Honour, are in less Danger and Hazard in the Field amongst ten thousand Enemies, than amongst these *sneaking Split-Causes*, these Snappers, Ensnarers, and *Catchers of Men*.

For they can make the righteous Law execute their Malice and Splcen (by *wresting*, *wrong setting* and *turning its Edge*) so that no Innocence, Honesty, Honour, or Ingenuity can prove a *sufficient Safeguard*.

The *wary Hollanders* therefore (though the greatest and wisest encouragers of Trade) of all *Trades and Mysteries of Iniquity*, suffer not the *Merchandize* of these *Hucksters of Law*, in any of their Territories.

They suffer neither *Bar-Gowns* nor *Button-Gowns* amongst them; They suffer no *Tinkerly Pleadings* of *mending que hale*, and *making top*; They suffer no Man's Cause to perish, by the Error or Folly, Knavery or Inadvertency of any Scribe or Attorney, by a word *mis-placed*, *mis-recited* or *mis-pleaded*; but every Man knows an end of his Cause the *same day* he commences it, and pleads *his own Cause*, before the *Lords*; (who seek not to *trap and catch* at their Ignorance) And they must be *very ignorant indeed*, if they make more *bungling work*, or can defeat their own Cause, disguise-

The Postscript.

guize or disgrace Truth, so readily as these *split-Causes* and *spoilt-Causes*.

Notwithstanding all this, I *would not* be construed to reflect in the least upon those *honest* and *learned* Gentlemen of the *Long-Robe*, of which sort are very many, that have more Integrity and Honour, than to *abuse* their *learned* Skill by *entrapping*, *ensnaring* and catching Men, with *Law-tricks*, and *Sham-tricks*, turning Darknes to Light, and Light to Darknes, and turning *Pleading* to *Rayling*, Lying and Slandering; now so much the Mode at Bar: a Shame it should be suffered!

'Tis these alone (as the World goes) that can defend us from the *catching Snares* laid by the former, to catch a *Man* and his *Cause*, a Man and his *Heritage*.

'Tis these alone (with the Authority, Justice and Wisdom of the Reverend Judges) that can deliver Men out of the *Snares* that are laid for them, by those *prostituted Hirelings*.

But none of the *Snares* that are laid to catch Men, are comparable to the *Subtilty* and *Cruelty* of the *Romish Priests*, for the *speediest* Execution of a *Sham-Plot*, is an *Absolution* from a *Jesuit*; or a *Bull of Indulgence* or *Jubilee* from the *Pope*, like that of *Pardon* to the late *Irish Rebels* and *Cut-Throats*.

So that the most *Cheveril-Charity* can scarcely have other Opinion of these *Romish* Emissaries, than *St. Hierome* had of the Clergy of his time, (who were so generally *debauch'd* and *mischievous*, that the good Father cryed out) *non puto multos inter Sacerdotes salvos fieri*; I cannot imagine (saith he) how it is possible that many Clergy-Men can go to Heaven!

So say I of these *Romish Priests*, if they stick to the Principles of their bloody Religion, I cannot imagine how they can possibly be saved.

For

For does not the *Inquisition* come out of *their holy Arcenal*? Are not all the *bloody Popish Plots and Sham-Plots*, contrived and managed by them? Did not they invent and forge in England, the *Writ de Haretico comburendo*, to condemn Hereticks (namely, *all that oppose their Pride and Covetousness*) to Fire and Faggot?

But how? not by setting Fire to the Faggot themselves, or turning Hang-men; no, *those holy Men* will not dip their *Sacred Hands in Blood*: (Oh the Hypocrisy of such Devotion!) No, no, they knew a way worth two on't; they made the poor enslaved Bigotted Magistrate do that Drudgery.

And before the Statute of Queen Elizabeth, (that awards *5 Eliz. 23.* the *Writ of Excommunicato capiendo*, and confines it to about ten sort of Offenders only) some think the same Popish Engineers in Popish Times were the first Inventers and Forgers of that *Writ* also: if they were, they were as unmercifully as unmerciful, to invent a Discipline that God never made; and that which our Blessed Saviour, the Holy Apostles, and Primitive Church, never knew; and then when they had anathematiz'd and curs'd a Man to the Devil, and the Devil did not or would not take him, then to make the Sheriff and the Tylor to take the Devil's Leavings, and when Hell would not or did not, then the Goal should: The Spanish Inquisition, and bloody Bishop Bonner Bishop of London, made great use of this Engine.

The former *Writ, de Haretico comburendo*, has found its just Dooms and Catastrophe; but that of *Excommunicato capiendo* shall stand in force (when it is awarded according to the Statute) as long as—When? as long as the King and Parliament shall please.

But if I thought that all our Mischiefs come from Rome and Popish Priests, I should think (as some have done) that there was more cause (than only the bare Error of the Press) that in the Popish New Testament in Latin (Printed at Cologne).

The postscript.

Cologn in 1581. stands Printed (with these words) *Scriptores (these words) Verus Sacrorum regum Dei possidebunt.*

No wonder therefore, that Pope Adrian 6. commanded Cheregas his Legate & Lator, to declare in a Diet of the Empire (assembled and held at Norimberg) in Germany. *A Sacrorum Iniquitatem Populi dimittes: multitudine enim gravet multisque modis peccatum esse Romae: & inde Pontificis civilem malum hoc, atque lucum ad Inferiores omnes Ecclesiarum Praefectos defuisse.* The Iniquity of the People came from the Priests; And that now, for the space of many Years, there have been great and grievous Enormities committed at Rome: And that all this Plague and Mischief, hath flowed unto all the Inferior Prelates of the Church, from the High Throne of the Pope's Holiness.

No wonder then, that their own Abbot St. Bernard saith—*Bestia illa de Apocalypsi, cui datum est ut loquens Blasphemias, & bellum gerere cum Sanctis, Petri Cathedram occupat, tanquam Leo paratus ad Praedam.* In English thus: That Beast that is spoken of in the Revelations, to whom is given a Mouth speaking Blasphemies, and to make War against the Saints, is now got up into Peter's Chair, like a Lion ready for his Prey.

And Albertus magnus saith, *Illi qui modo Praesunt in Ecclesiis, plurimum sunt Fures & Latrones; plus Exatores quam Pastores, plus Spoliatores quam Tutores, plus Mactatores quam Custodes, plus Perversores quam Doctores, plus Seducatores quam Ductores; Isti sunt Nuncii Antichristi, Subversores Ovium Christi:* (that is) The Prelates of the Church are most of them Theeves and Robbers; Wolves rather than Shepherds, rather Spoilers than Defenders, rather Killers than Keepers; rather Deceivers than Doctors, rather Perverters than Converters: These be the Ambassadors and Nuntio's of Antichrist, the Devourers of the Sheep of Christ.

Johan.
Sleidan.
l. 4. ann.
1585.

Bernard.
Epist. 125.
pag. 1316.

Albertus
in Johan.
cap. 10. E.
E.

The Postscript.

And in the Council of Rhemes, the same Bernard (before praised) told the Bishops to their Faces in open Council, and in open Court, (though he himself was no Bishop) *Dicimini Pastores, cum sitis raptores, (Fratres) Jesus hodie elegit sibi multos Diabulos Episcopos, non sunt Pastores sed Traditores.* (In English thus) My Brethren, ye are called Bishops, but ye are meer Men-catchers and Robbers; Jesus now adays has chosen to himself many Devils to be Bishops: They are not Pastors, but treacherous *fra-*
das-ses.

Bernard.
in Concilio
Remensi.

See more
in Sermon
66. Ber-
nard in
Cantic.

And Johannes Sarisburiensis gave this Reason, to Pope Adrian 4. why Popes are usually so short-lived—*Ne totam corrumpant Ecclesiam*, lest they should (quoth he) infect the whole Church.

Johan Sa-
risburiensis
in Poly-
cratico:
l. 6. c. 24.

And one (of their own Cardinals) writes—That Pope Hildebrand poisoned six Popes successively one after another, to make room for himself to leap into the Papal Chair, which he purchased by those *Divine Arts*; Here was a Pope-catcher as well as a Man-catcher.

Beno Car-
dinalis.

And Pope Urban 6. was a Cardinal-catcher; for he catch'd five of his Cardinals at one time in a Sack, and threw them alive into the Sea, and drown'd them.

Sabellicus
Ænead. 9.
lib. 9.

And Pope John 12. catch'd one of his Cardinals by the Nose and cut it off; and another by the right Hand and cut that off too.

Sabellicus
Ænead. 9.
lib. 2.

And Pope Stephanus catch'd the dead Body of Pope Formosus his Predecessor, and cut off his Head and fore-fingers, and then threw the naked Carcase (of this *quondam Infallibility*) into the River Tyber.

Platina in
vir. Ste-
phan. 6.

And more than once, some of them have catch'd and catch'd Men to the Grave, by giving them a poisoned Water in the Sacrament, and poisoning the Wine in the Chalice or Cup.

True is it what their own Writer saith, in Allusion to the Cruelty of Popes, reciting Heb. 9. 7. *Into the Holy of*

Camoten-
sis.

The Postscript.

Holies (the Papal Chair) did the High Priest enter alone, but not without Blood.

Whilst we say of the Protestant Religion (which God has miraculously preserved so long, and (I prophesy) will still preserve in despite of all the Popish and Hellish Stratagems, False Evidence and Sham-Plots (as was said of Israel) The more they were afflicted the more they grew.

Therefore cheer up, true English Hearts! Let not your Christian Courage flag; If by Popish Plots or Sham-Plots, we cannot live Protestants, we can die Protestants.

Thus Gregory Nazianzen comforted the Christians in his time, telling them of the excellency of their Religion in these Words, *θανάτου ζῆν, τοῦ μὴ φέρεται, καὶ ἀυξεται δεικνύμενον*, It lives by Death, the more 'tis cut, the faster it springs, and grows by diminishing.

Cyp. 7. 1.
Epist. 3.

So Cyprian — *Sacerdos Dei Evangelium tenens & Christi praecepta custodiens, occidi potest, vinci non potest*: A Minister of God following the Precepts Evangelical, may be killed, but not conquered.

As Chrysostom answered the threatening Empress Endoxia, *nil nisi peccatum metuo*—tell her, I fear nothing but Sin; she might fright a Parasitical Knave or Fool, but not a Chrysostom; she may kill me, but she cannot hurt me.

Prov. 11.

For there is no Wisdom, nor Understanding, nor Counsel, against the Lord, if we believe the Holy Spirit of God. He conclude this with Holy David's Prayer, Psal. 119. 121.

Psal. 119.

I deal with the thing that is lawful and right, O give me not over unto mine Oppressors.

121.

F I N I S.

